Salah (Prayers) Step by Step with Illustrations and Audio Sections

الصلاة خطوة خطوة بالصوت والصورة

{English – إنجليزي}

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Al-'Uboodiyyah[1]

`*Uboodiyyah* is a comprehensive term that asserts the meaning of the Verse (Aayah): **"You Alone do we worship and You Alone do we seek for Help."** (Qur'an 1: 5)

It comprises the slavery of the heart, tongue and limbs to Allaah *ta`aala*. The slavery of the heart includes both the *qawl* (saying of the heart) and *`amaal* (actions of the heart). The *qawl* of the heart is the belief (*i`tiqaad*) in what Allaah has informed about His Self, His Names and Attributes, His Action, His Angels, and that which He revealed in His Book and sent upon the tongue of His Messenger Muhammad *sallallahu `alayhi wa sallam* (i.e. peace and blessings of Allah be upon him)[2].

The *`amaal* of the heart include love for Allaah, reliance upon Him, turning to Him in repentance, fearing Him, having hope in Him, devoting the Deen sincerely to Him, having patience in what He orders and forbids, having patience with His decrees and being pleased with them, having allegiance for His pleasure, having humility for Him and humbling oneself in front of Him, and becoming tranquil with Him.

The *qawl* (saying) of the tongue is to convey what Allah has revealed (in the Qur'an and authentic Sunnah) regarding Himself, His Names and Attributes, His Actions, His Commands, His Prohibitions, and all that is related to this Deen), to call to it, defend it, to expose the false innovations which oppose it, and to establish its remembrance and to convey what it orders. The *`amaal* (actions) of the limbs include the Salaat (prayers), jihaad, attending the Jumu`ah prayers and the rest of the *jamaa`aat* (congregational prayers), assisting those who are unable, and acting with goodness and kindness to creation, and other such acts.

This comprehensive meaning of the `*Uboodiyyah* pertains to its specific type. The people who fall under this type of `*Uboodiyyah* are the believers who obey, love, and sincerely follow the *deen* of Allaah *ta`aala*.

The second type of `*Uboodiyyah* is the general one in which all creatures in the heavens and in the earth are subdued to Allaah's sovereign Authority and Power; everything is subservient to His Will, and Authority; nothing occurs or ceases to occur except by His leave; His is the Kingdom and He disposes the affairs as He pleases. This type of `*Uboodiyyah* is known as the `*Uboodiyyah* of *qahr* (Subduing) and *Mulk* (Sovereignty, Kingship, Possession, Mastership, etc.).

So, the part of the Aayah signifying, **"You do we worship"** asserts the adherence to the four principles of `Uboodiyyah: The sayings of the heart, the actions of the heart, the sayings of the tongue, and the actions of the limbs.

The other part, **"You Alone do we seek for Help,"** stresses the fact that the believer must ask Allaah alone to help him establish the `*Uboodiyyah* and succeed in executing all what it requires.

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[1] **From a footnote in "The Dispraise of *Al-Hawaa* (Desire)" by Ibnul-Qayyem Al-Jawziyyah (published by Dar Al-Bukhaari in 1998).**

[2] **Between these two brackets is by the reviewer.**

1- Meaning of *Salah* (Prayers)

As-Salah: In the Arabic language it means *du'aa'* (invocation).

As-Salah: Islamically it means to worship Allaah through certain known and prescribed sayings and actions starting with *takbeer* (saying *Allaahu Akbar* i.e. Allaah is the Greater), and ending with *tasleem* (saying: *as-salaamu 'alaykum wa rahmatul-lahi wa barakaatuh* i.e. may Allaah's Peace, Mercy, and Blessings be upon you).

2- The Merits of *As-Salah*

1. Prevents from *al-Fahshaa'* (great sins of every kind, unlawful sexual intercourse, etc.) **and *al-Munkar*** (disbelief, polytheism, and every kind of evil wicked deed, etc.). (See Quran C: 29, V: 45).

2. The best of deeds after the Testimony of Faith (*laa ilaaha illal-laah, Muhammad rasoulul-laah*). (See hadeeth of 'Abdullaah ibn Mas'oud (*radiyallaahu 'anhu*) in Bukhari (v. 9, p. 625) & Muslim)

3. Washes out sins. (See hadeeth of Jaabir (*radiyallaahu 'anhu*) in Muslim (v. 1, p. 1410)

4. Expiates sins. (See hadeeth of Abu Hurairah (*radiyallaahu 'anhu*) in Muslim (v. 1, p. 450)

5. A light for its adherent in this Life and in the Hereafter. (See hadeeth of Ibn 'Umar (*radiyallaahu 'anhuma*) in Musnad Ahmad (v. 2, p. 169) with good chain of narration)

6. Raises in rank and removes sins. (See hadeeth of Thawbaan (*radiyallaahu 'anhu*) in Muslim (v. 1, p. 989)

7. One of the greatest causes to enter Paradise with the company of the Prophet (*sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*[3]). (See hadeeth of Rabee'ah Al-Aslami (*radiyallaahu 'anhu*) in Muslim (v. 1, p. 990)

8. Between each performance of *salaah* and the next performance, sins are pardoned. (See hadeeth 'Uthmaan (*radiyallaahu 'anhu*) in Muslim (v. 1, p. 438)

9. The angels will ask Allaah for Blessings and Forgiveness upon the adherent in his place of prayers. (See hadeeth of Abu Hurairah (*radiyallaahu 'anhu*) in Bukhari (v. 3, p. 330) and in Muslim)

10. Waiting for the next prayer after performing a prayer is *ribaat* (keeping oneself adhering and firm on acts of obedience). (See hadeeth of Abu Hurairah (*radiyallaahu 'anhu*) in Muslim no. 251)

[3] **I.e. peace and blessings of Allah be upon him.**

11. The one who goes to the Mosque to perform the prayer is in prayer until he returns. (See hadeeth of Abu Hurairah (*radiyallaahu 'anhu*) in *Saheeh ibn Khuzaimah*; *authenticated by Al-Albani)*

3- The Five Obligatory (Obl.) Prayers + Regular (Reg.) + Optional Prayers (Opt.)

Allah, the Most High, Says:

إِنَّ الصَّلَاةَ كَانَتْ عَلَى الْمُؤْمِنِينَ كِتَابًا مَوْقُوتًا

"Verily, *Salah* (Prayers) is enjoined on the believers - to be performed - at fixed times." (Qur'an 4:103)

The Prayers are

Prayer	Time	Reg* or Opt** (before the Obligatory) Units	Obligatory Units	Reg* or Opt** (following the Obligatory) Units
Fajr (early morning); 2 Obligatory units	Dawn - sunrise	2*	2	-
Dhuhr (noonday); 4 obligatory units.	*Zawaa*l (sun passing its zenith) – time of next prayer (*'Asr*)	2* & 2*	4	2 (2**)
'Asr (late afternoon), 4 obligatory units.	Time when shadow of a vertical stick equals its length - sunset	4**	4	-
Maghrib (sunset); 3 obligatory units.	Sunset – disappearance of red twilight (glow) in the sky.	2**	3	2*
Ishaa' (night); 4 obligatory units	Disappearance of the red glow – midnight	2*	4	2*, 2*, 1*

One Unit of Prayer *(Rak'ah)* constitutes certain actions: standing, bowing, prostrating, sitting, and prostrating.

If one misses an obligatory prayer due to sleep or forgetfulness, then the person must perform it a s soon as he/she wakes up or when he/she remembers it.

What Is To Be Done Before Performing *Salah*

1. Ritual Purity (*wudu'* or *ghusl* depending on the state of impurity)

2. Clean place.

3. Men to perform obligatory *salah* at the mosque (except for a legal excuse; illness, etc.); rest of prayers at home.

4. Women to perform *salah* in the innermost places at home (they are allowed to pray at the mosques, but not mandatory).

5. Wearing loose clothes that does not shape the private parts for men (and extend down until above the ankle), while women cover their entire bodies except face and hands.

6. Standing close to a *sutrah* in front of the *musallee* (person in prayer). [*Sutrah*: an object like a pillar, sticking or laying down on the ground, set so that no human or animal can walk in front of the person performing *salah*].

General Guidelines:

1. Learn direction of Qiblah & times of prayer in your location (contact closest Sunni Mosque)

2. Learn the movements and shorter sentences. Practice what is to be said in prayers.

3. Work to learn the Recitation of the Opening Chapter in the Qur'an (the Faatiha).

Performance of *Salah*

1. Intention (it is a determination in the heart that you are performing a particular *salah*; not to be uttered).

2. Face the direction of the *qiblah* (Sacred House in Makkah Known as *Ka'bah*). Raise your hands to the level of the shoulders, or earlobes, and say:

"ALLAHU AKBAR" -

Standing Facing *Qiblah* and Making *Takbeer* with Raised Voice

3. Place the right hand over the left on the chest. Look at the place of prostration without lowering your head.

Hands on the Chest; Right Hand over the Left

4. Recite the Opening Invocation (*du'aa*) for *salah*:

"سبحانَكَ اللهمَ وبحمدِكَ تبارك اسمُكَ وتعالى جدُّكَ ولا إلهَ غيرُك"

"Subhanaka Allaahumma wa bihamdika tabaarakas muka wa ta'aalaa jadduka wa laa ilaaha ghairuk"

(O Allaah! I declare You far removed from above all imperfection, and that You deserve all Praise. Blessed is Your Name. Your Majesty (Glory and Might) is Exalted, and there is no true God Worthy of Worship Except You.)

5. Recitation of Soorat Al-Faatiha (Opening Chapter of the Qur'an): Must be recited in every unit of prayer (Rak'ah). Begin by utter the following with a low voice:

أعوذُ باللهِ منَ الشّيطانِ الرّجيم *** بسم الله الرحمن الرحيم

"*A'oodthu billahi minash-shaitanir-rajeem. Bismillaahir-Rahmannir-Raheem*"

(I seek Refuge with Allaah from Satan, the outcast. In the Name of Allaah, the Most Beneficent, the Most Merciful, I begin)

Then you Must recite the *Faatiha*h in every *rak'ah*, pausing after each verse (*aayah*):

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ * الْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ رَبِّ الْعَالَمِينَ * الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ *
مَالِكِ يَوْمِ الدِّينِ * إِيَّاكَ نَعْبُدُ وَإِيَّاكَ نَسْتَعِينُ * اهْدِنَا الصِّرَاطَ الْمُسْتَقِيمَ *
صِرَاطَ الَّذِينَ أَنْعَمْتَ عَلَيْهِمْ غَيْرِ الْمَغْضُوبِ عَلَيْهِمْ وَلَا الضَّالِّينَ

"All the praises and thanks be to Allaah, the Lord of the *'Alamîn* (mankind, jinn and all that exists). The Most Gracious, the Most Merciful. The Only Owner (and the Only Ruling Judge) of the Day of Recompense (i.e. the Day of Resurrection). You (Alone) we worship, and You (Alone) we ask for help (for each and everything). Guide us to the Straight Way. The Way of those on whom You have bestowed Your Grace, not (the way) of those who earned Your Anger (such as the Jews), nor of those who went astray (such as the Christians)."

At the end, you must say "*Aameen*."

Those who cannot recite the *Faatihah* may say instead, "*subhanah Allah, al-hamdulillah, and la illaah illallaah*, *Allaahu akbar, and laa hawlah wa laa quwata illaa bil-laah*" which means: I declare Allaah far removed from all imperfection, and deserving all the Praise, and that there is no true God other than Allaah.

6. *Rukoo'* (Bowing Down)

(i) Raise the hands as described previously (see above) and say *ALLAAHU AKBAR* (Allaah is the Greater) while going into the bowing position.

(ii) In bowing posture, put the hands on the knees and grab them with your elbows away from your sides, and your back straightened with the head leveled with your back (see below):

Bowing (*rukoo'*) Position in *Salah*

(iii) While in bowing position one says:

"سُبحانَ رَبِّيَ العَظيم"

"*Subhanna rabbiyal 'adheem*" (3 times) -

(Far removed from every imperfection is my *Rabb* (Lord), the Great) -

7. Standing Erect (*Qiyaam*) after *Rukoo'*:

(i) Rise from bowing, raising you hands to the levels of the shoulders, or earlobes, saying:

سَمِعَ اللهُ لِمَنْ حَمِدَهُ

"*Sami'Allahu li man hamdidah*"

(Allaah hears the one who praises Him)

(ii) Stand upright until one's very parts take their positions and say:

رَبَّنَا ولكَ الحَمد

"*Rabbana walakal-hamd*"

(O our *Rabb* (Lord)! All the praise is due to You)

8. The *sujood* (prostration) & *juloos* (sitting):

(i) Reach the ground with the hand's first and then the knees while saying *ALLAAHU AKBAR* (Allaah is the Greater), and rest on your palm's and place your forehead, nose, knees, and feet on the floor with your belly away from your thighs. Toes should be erected and directed to the Qiblah. Your arms should be away from the ground, as bellow, saying:

سبحان ربي الأعلى (ثلاث مرات)

"Subhaana Rabiyyal-'Alaa" (3 times)

(Far removed is my Rabb, the Most High, from any Imperfection) -

Prostration Position

(iii) Then you raise your head while saying, "*ALLAAHU AKBAR*" (sometimes raising one's hands), sit on your left leg while keeping your right foot upright with its fingers to the *qiblah*. Put your hands on your knees (see below), and supplicate saying:

"رَبِّي اغفِر لِي"

"Rabbigh-fir lee"

(O my Rabb! Forgive me) -

Sitting Position -

The left and right foot in *IFTIRASH*

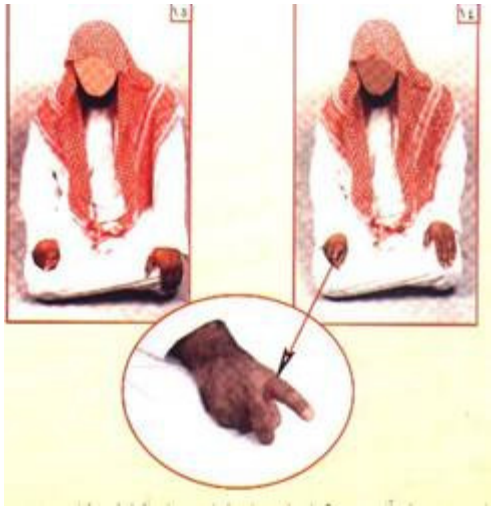
This position of IFTIRASH is done in the last *rak'ah* of *Fajr* and *Maghrib* Prayer and in all Regular or optional prayers.

(iv) Following the sitting position, you come up with a second prostration as you did before. Once done you have completed one full unit (*rak'ah*). Say, "Allaahu Akbar" and stand up for the second *rak'ah*. Do it in the same manner as you did the first one, but without reciting the opening supplication.

9. Sitting for *tashahhud* (testification of Faith): First *tashahhud*

(i) Once you finish the second Rak'ah, follow the same way of sitting as above. Hold your right hand closed with its thumb and middle finger touching each other like in a circle while pointing the index finger straight in the direction of the *qiblah* and moving it through the recitation of the *tashahhud*:

"التَّحِيَّاتُ لِلَّهِ وَالصَّلَوَاتُ وَالطَّيِّبَاتُ السَّلَامُ عَلَى النَّبِيُّ وَرَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ وَبَرَكَاتُهُ
السَّلَامُ عَلَيْنَا وَعَلَى عِبَادِ اللَّهِ الصَّالِحِين. أَشْهَدُ أَنْ لا إِلَهَ إِلَّا اللَّهُ وَأَشْهَدُ أَنَّ
مُحَمَّدًا عَبْدُهُ وَرَسُولُهُ."



"Attahiyyaatu lillaahi wassalawaatu wattayyibatu. Assalaamu 'alayka ayyuhan-Nabiyyi warahmatullaahi wabarakaatuh. Assalaamu 'alyna wa 'ala 'ibaadillaahis saaliheen. Ash-hadu an laa ilaaha illallaah wa ash-hadu anna Muhammadan 'abduhu wa rasooluh."

(All compliments [Allaah is free of all imperfection, His is the dominion, Magnificence, Endless existence belongs to Him], prayers, and pure words and deeds, are due to Allaah. May Allaah grant the Prophet safety from all defects and imperfections and keep his message safe from all evil; [may Allaah grant him] mercy and honor. May safety and security be granted to us and to all the righteous slaves of Allaah. I bear witness that none has the right to be worshipped except Allaah, and I bear witness that Muhammad is His slave and Messenger.)

Full Tashahhud

(i) At the end of the last *rak'ah*, recite the first *tashahhud* and follow it with the following recitation known as *As-Salaatul Ibraaheemiyyah*:

" اللَّهُمَّ صَلِّ عَلَى مُحَمَّدٍ وَعَلَى آلِ مُحَمَّدٍ كَمَا صَلَّيْتَ عَلَى إِبْرَاهِيمَ وَعَلَى آلِ إِبْرَاهِيمَ إِنَّكَ حَمِيدٌ مَجِيدٌ. اللَّهُمَّ بَارِكْ عَلَى مُحَمَّدٍ وَعَلَى آلِ مُحَمَّدٍ كَمَا بَارَكْتَ عَلَى إِبْرَاهِيمَ وَعَلَى آلِ إِبْرَاهِيمَ إِنَّكَ حَمِيدٌ مَجِيدٌ"

"Allaahumma salli 'ala Muhammad wa 'ala aali Muhammad kama sallaita 'ala Ibraaheem wa 'ala aali Ibraaheem innaka Hameedun Majeed, wabaarik 'ala Muhammad wa 'ala aali Muhamaad kama baarakta 'ala Ibraaheem wa 'ala aali Ibraaheem innaka Hameedun Majeed."

(O Allaah! Praise Muhammad, and on the family of Muhammad, as You Praised Ibraaheem, and the family of Ibraaheem; You are indeed Worthy of Praise, Full of Glory. And send blessings on Muhammad, and on the family of Muhammad, as you sent blessings on Ibraaheem, and the family of Ibraaheem; You are indeed Worthy of Praise, Full of Glory.)

What to do when going for the final Rak'ah in Salah?

In the prayers of the three or four *rak'ah* type, after finishing the second *rak'ah* and the first *tashahhud*, stand up raising your hands (as described earlier) and say, "*ALLAAHU AKBAR*." When you reach the straight standing position, recite the *Faatihah* and go for the prostrations as done earlier. If you are praying the three *rak'ah* prayer of *Maghrib* sit with your body resting on your left thigh, your left leg under your right, while keeping your right foot upright. This position is called *tawarruk*:

Tawarruk Position -

For the four *rak'ah* prayers, stand up at the end of the third *rak'ah* and bring fourth the fourth and final *rak'ah*. Recite full *tashahhud* in the *tawarruk* position. After recitation of the *tashahhud*, you can supplicate Allaah with the following invocation (*du'aa'*):

"اللَّهُمَّ إِنِّي أَعُوذُ بِكَ مِنْ عَذَابِ الْقَبْرِ وَأَعُوذُ بِكَ مِنْ فِتْنَةِ الْمَسِيحِ الدَّجَّالِ وَأَعُوذُ بِكَ مِنْ فِتْنَةِ الْمَحْيَا وَفِتْنَةِ الْمَمَاتِ اللَّهُمَّ إِنِّي أَعُوذُ بِكَ مِنَ الْمَأْثَمِ وَالْمَغْرَمِ"

"Allaahumma Inni a'oodthu bika min adthabil qabr, wa a'oodthu bika min fitnatil-Maseeh ad-Dajjal, wa a'oodthu bika min fitnatil mahya wal mamat. Allaahumma inni a'oodthu bika minal-ma'tham walmaghram."

(O Allaah! I seek refuge with You from the Punishment of the grave and from the *Fitnah* (trail or affliction) of *Ad-Dajjaal* (pseudo Messiah), and from the *Fitnah* of life and *Fitnah* of death. O Allaah! I seek refuge with You from the sins and from being in debt.)

You may also ask Allaah to bestow upon you from the good things for this life and for the hereafter.

10. Concluding *salah* by tasleem:

After you recite the *tashahhud* and make the supplications, turn your head to the right and say:

"السَّلامُ عَلَيكُم وَرَحمَةُ اللهِ وبَرَكَاتُه"

"*Assalaammu 'alaykum warahmatul-lahi wabarakatuh*"
(May Allaah's Peace, Mercy and Blessings be upon you)

Then turn your head left and say:

"السَّلامُ عَلَيكُم وَرَحمَةُ اللهِ"

"*Assalaammu 'alaykum warahmatul-laah*"

Prayer Is Concluded

Condition, Pillars, Obligatory acts, and Sunan of salah are detailed on the site http:/www.understand-islam.net audio library.

References and Acknowledgment

1. Summaries of prayers (Arabic) by the three great Imaams of our time: Sh. Ibn Baaz, Sh. Al-Albani, and Sh. Ibn 'Uthaimeen (may Allah's Mercy be upon them all).

2. The Prophet's prayer described (English) by Sh. Al-Albani. Translated by Usama Ibn Suhaib Hasan (1413/1993 ed.)

3. The Islamic digest of *Aqeedah* & *Fiqh*, by br. Mahmoud R. Murad (1998 ed.)

4. Illustration adapted from http://islam.groub.com/modules/w-s-groub/ (Prayers described).

5. Sister Umm Ahmad Al-Kanadiyyah for her encouragement and support to produce reliable information for new Muslims trying to learn *salah*.